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and there is something very naïve in the manner in which the author, after announcing one of his "wonderful" discoveries, adds a quotation from Doughty or Clermont-Ganneau or Palmer, or a reference to Trumbull or Frazer, which shows that the "discovery" had been made by others long before. There is, in fact, not a single new point brought out in the book, the value of which consists wholly in the additional illustrations that Professor Curtiss has furnished of "survivals" covering a wide range of religious rites and customs that have been a commonplace of oriental archæology for the last twenty years. When, as occasionally happens, the author ventures beyond the mere gathering of material to the interpretation of it, he soon gets beyond his depth and reveals the crudity of his archæological attainments. So in the chapter on "Modern Semites" he enters upon generalizations about Semites which utterly fail to take into account the mixed character of the population of Syria and Palestine, and again, in treating of conceptions of God among the modern inhabitants of these countries, Professor Curtiss draws conclusions from a few isolated instances which are wide of the mark, while in the chapter on "The Moral Relation of Man to God" he endeavors to foist upon the modern Semites a conception of sin, that so far from being a characteristic of any particular race, is common to all people occupying a certain level of culture. It is evident from the manner in which the author quotes from the Koran that he has never read it in the original, and yet with a second-hand acquaintance of Islam he does not hesitate to pronounce a verdict, on one of the great religions of the world, that might have been excusable one hundred years ago, but is simply preposterous when uttered by a modern scholar.

Under these circumstances it is a pity that the author should not have confined himself to what he has shown himself so well capable of doing—collecting illustrations of "survivals." We must not close the notice without calling attention to the valuable appendix added by Dr. W. Hayes Ward on "Altars and Sacrifices in the Primitive Art of Babylonia" (pp. 266-277), which is a genuine contribution to the subject, of prime importance. Dr. Ward furnishes nineteen illustrations of sacrifices depicted on cylinders and other monuments of ancient Mesopotamia. His account of the various forms of altars, of the deities represented and of the kinds of sacrifices offered is most illuminative and induces one to express the hope that we may soon have a comprehensive work on the Babylonian cylinders from Dr. Ward, who for many years has made a special study of this important and interesting subject.

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*Nominating Systems: Direct Primaries versus Conventions in the United States.* By ERNST C. MEYER. Pp. 501. Price, \$1.50. Published by the Author. Madison, Wisconsin, 1902.

This volume is divided into four parts and thirty-six chapters. In Part I is traced the evolution of the caucus and convention system from its origin to the present stage of development. Part II deals with direct primary legis-

lation in the United States and is meant to open up sources of study for the practical members of a legislature who seek primary reform. In Part III, the author discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the direct-vote principle as shown by an extensive and varied experience. Specific facts are given and many references are made from American books, magazines, newspapers and addresses, "in order to ascertain whether or no the results of direct primaries have been sufficiently favorable to justify the plea for an extension of their principle, and for the adoption of some plan upon a wider scale for further experimentation. This will be the most useful portion of the volume for the student as well as the practical legislator.

Part IV contains a discussion of the forces of reform operating in the field of politics at the present day, and is written for the purpose of reaching some conclusion as to what should be done in order to bring about primary reform. There is certain to be a great waste of energy in all parts of our country before the realization of all reformatory efforts, that is legislation for good government.

The system of nominations has a more direct influence upon the welfare of the citizen than any other phase or branch of our government. It touches him daily, if not hourly. In the rural districts the sheriff and the selectman are as important as the mayor and comptroller of a great city, or the governor of a State or the congressman.

In States, cities, counties, towns and villages where a nomination is equivalent to an election, the voter should do his utmost to prevent corruption, trickery or intimidation at the caucus and the convention. The ship of State is steered by the primary; and it is not too much to say that the cradle of liberty rests on the ballot box.

The author traces the history of primary election laws in the United States beginning with California in 1866.

Pennsylvania (with local acts) and Kentucky have long had laws for direct primaries. Of late years Massachusetts and several Western States have adopted such laws, some being optional and some compulsory. In 1898 the New York legislature enacted a measure for official primaries at the public expense; and this act, which has subsequently been amended, is described at great length by Mr. Meyer. The author thinks the Minnesota Direct Primary Act of 1899 the best law on the statute books, and refers to the great interest in this subject during 1901, the legislatures of nineteen States having had direct primary bills under consideration. At present a large majority of citizens think they have done their duty to the State if they vote at a general election. If direct primaries were universal, a larger number of electors would certainly take part in them.

Mr. Meyer discusses the college man's apathy towards primary elections on account of the vast amount of time required to manage them, especially when a few reformers attempt to prevent the nomination of a disreputable candidate by the "machine." The American college graduate has a duty to perform to the State and if he cannot afford to neglect his profession or business to hold public office, he should at least attend the primary every year. There is a very interesting chapter on "Who Shall Vote at the Primary."

Minority nominations, the "machine" and the corporation, the city and county voter, and candidates, *under direct primaries*, are fully discussed. Some decisions are cited where primary election laws have been declared unconstitutional. The volume closes with a consideration of the direct primary in its relation to other reforms.

Those who seek better government should learn that all reform is a matter of gradual growth. Half a loaf is better than no bread, and a half-way measure is better than no change in the law, because a political party in power will rarely pass a stringent law to injure those in office. Although the original act was several times amended, it took seven years in New York to get the genuine Australian ballot law, while in Massachusetts, where an educational qualification for voters prevails, ballot reform was obtained in 1888—the first year that this measure came before the legislature! The author well says (p. 428): "A few fanatical reformers who stand wringing their hands, and crying out into the world to help make straight the way, cannot accomplish much."

*Festina lente* must be the motto of those who propose legislative reforms; otherwise the result might be no legislation, and a worthy cause may languish for a term of years. Primary reform is much more important in the large cities, than in the rural districts. A special chapter is, therefore, devoted to "Municipal Government Under Direct Primaries." In the appendix is the full text of the Stevens' Direct Primary Election Bill of Wisconsin, which failed to pass the legislature at the session of 1901. This measure might be introduced in all legislatures by the advocates of the direct primary, and if it cannot pass in the original form in States which have no primary law, a beginning would at least be made until public sentiment is strong enough to force the enactment of such an advanced reform, as the direct primary.

Mr. Meyer's work seems to be the best book to date on the subject of direct nominations.

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*Tribal Custom in Anglo-Saxon Law*: being an Essay Supplemental to (1) The English Village Community, (2) The Tribal System in Wales. By FREDERICK SEEBOHM, LL. D., F. S. A. Pp. 538. London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1902.

A somewhat portentous standard is being set for English historical "essays," when such works as the one under review or Professor Maitland's "Three Essays on Domesday Book and Beyond," Professor Vinogradoff's "Essays on Feudalism in England," and Professor Seeley's "The Growth of English Policy: an Historical Essay," are so described. A solid volume of more than five hundred pages, the result of personal investigation of the sources and of much search in recondite secondary works on special points, illuminated by the development of original theories, and resulting in the solution of old and difficult problems, is an "essay" which may well prevent young historians from putting out hasty, exiguous or insignificant work.